

City Council Special Meeting, December 9, 2002  
1070 Sixth Avenue, Conference Room 101

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Warden, Bauer, Metropulos, Wright

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Manager Kersnar, City Attorney Savaree, Deputy City Clerk Harrington

## **STUDY SESSION 5:45 P.M.**

### **Council consideration of format for interviews for City Council applicants.**

The City Council concurred to ask the following questions of all candidates:  
What have you done for the City of Belmont in the last five years? C. Wright  
What are the three biggest issues facing Belmont? C. Metropulos  
How do you see working with the Council as a team? C. Bauer  
What unique value do you bring to this group? C. Bauer  
What would you change about the City of Belmont? C. Warden  
If time allowed, they would ask follow up questions and candidate closing comments.

### **PUBLIC/COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mayor Wright invited comments. There was no response.

Mayor Wright asked Council to provide feedback on the procedure for appointments. C. Warden suggested having a nomination process at the regular council meeting before discussing candidates.

City Manager Kersnar clarified that a nomination and a second to the nomination is not an obligation to vote for the candidate. He stated none of the candidates would be eliminated from consideration until the final vote.

Mayor Wright stated they could narrow the candidates down, yet still select from the entire group. He further stated that he wanted the councilmembers to share their individual criteria at the start of the discussion on Tuesday night. Council concurred with this suggestion.

### **Interview candidates for City Council Vacancy.**

**John Violet,** current Finance Commissioner, former school board member. He thought the fiscal issue, police station and traffic were the top issues. He would like government services provided in a fiscally responsible manner. He

stated the Finance Commission is purely advisory and serving on the Council he would have a direct impact on legislation. Mr. Violet stated the Finance Commission was concerned with the police station facility and what alternatives could be considered to move it ahead within the available resources.

**George Burgess**, thought the top issues were the finances of the City and the Visioning/General Plan. He noted that some citizens east of El Camino Real did not feel represented on the City Council and suggested conducting a meeting in that part of the City. Mr. Burgess stated he had the ability ask questions, analyze alternatives and make recommendations. He suggested the City work in partnership with Notre Dame de Namur University. He thought he could work effectively with the Council and would campaign for office if a special election were called.

**Louis Vella**, Mid-Peninsula Water Board, Belmont Heights Civic Improvement Association, has 22 years of municipal experience. Thought the top issues were traffic congestion, neighborhood issues (unkempt property, abandoned cars, blocked views etc.) and vision for downtown. He stated the City Council set the tone and he wanted to participate. He noted that at the State of the City 10 projects were listed, he stated that accomplishing those projects would be a giant step to change Belmont.

**Recess** 6:57 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

**Coralin Feierbach**, former Council member and current Planning Commissioner. She outlined accomplishments while she served on the City Council, including the Oracle agreement, Noise Abatement, Code Enforcement, Design Review, the sale of bonds and the beginning of the Fire Station project. She thought the top issues were the need for economic development in the downtown area, the budget shortfall and traffic. She stated the downtown needed to change and cited Burlingame's thriving downtown. Ms. Feierbach suggested the City provide an interactive webpage. She stated she probably would not run if a special election were called in June.

**Chuck Rukstales**, stated that he relocated from Illinois 2 ½ years ago to work as a consultant for the utility industry. He noted that he had an outsider point of view. He thought the top issues were the budget, traffic and accentuating the relationship with Notre Dame de Namur University. He served on a City Council while living in Illinois and represented 70,000 constituents. He thought his experience on the Finance and the Judiciary committee for that city would be an asset. Mr. Rukstales noted the Council

had to make decisions on tough issues and he would like to give back to the community that welcomed him.

**George Kranen**, served on the Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee, San Juan Canyon Preservation Trust, Park and Recreation Commissioner, and Precinct Captain for the Library campaign. He thought the biggest issues were the budget shortfall, the library and the City Hall Retrofit. Mr. Kranen suggested the Council form a Youth Advisory Committee, and develop staff expertise to decrease the need for consultants. Mr. Kranen stated he would like all routes to local schools secure enough for children to walk to school.

**Franklin Harris**, has lived in Belmont for two years and serves as a volunteer driver at Cipriani School. He thought the biggest issues were the need for a new library, a cohesive plan for the downtown area and traffic. Mr. Harris stated he would be thorough when evaluating issues.

**Recess** 7:50 P.M. to 8:15 P.M.

**Nancy Levitt**, former Councilmember, stated she has worked on school campaigns, on County Fair and Expo Board, National Security Appointee, Council on American Woman in Politics. Thought the top issues were completing the Fire Station, City Hall/Police Facility project, and developing new revenue sources. She stated the goal of Council was to accomplish things for citizens; it was nice to get along as a council but it was not the top priority. She thought it was cost prohibitive to delay projects after new people have come on board and after the initial public input and studies were completed. Ms. Levitt stated that if appointed, she would serve on Council until the next regular election to allow citizens the right to vote for a councilmember.

**Aimee Swanson**, moved to Belmont two months ago. Thought the top issues were new stations for the Police and Fire departments, traffic and youth involvement in government. Stated she values teamwork, was enthusiastic and had a new perspective to share. Ms. Swanson currently volunteers for the Junior League of San Francisco and has worked with high school students on developing interview skills. She thought the downtown area needed to be developed and better outreach to the community on city services.

**William Dickenson** member of the Sterling Downs Neighborhood Association. He thought the top issues were educational budget cuts, traffic calming, and financial stability. He stated the City needed to bring businesses in to fill the vacant commercial space. He stated he had vision, integrity and proven experience. He would consider running for Council if he

had community support, however he hoped Council would appoint to save the expense of a special election.

**Recess** 8:50 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

**Gary Harris,** served on Council, Planning Commission, chairman of the Computer Science advisory committee for Notre Dame de Namur University, founding member of the College of Sciences Board of Advisors, and Art & Wine Festival volunteer. He thought the top issues were the budget, building the fire station and the library, and making Belmont the best place on the Peninsula to live work and do business. Mr. Harris stated he is a dealmaker who can bring people to a consensus on issues. He listed the Grade Separation and the Harbor Annexation as accomplishments. He stated that if appointed, he would resign in time for the next regular election to allow the voters to speak.

**Catherine Barber,** former Parks and Recreation Commissioner, previously worked for Supervisor Rich Gordon, and a current Homeowners Association Member. She thought the top issues were updating the General Plan/Visioning, the Budget and quality of life issues. She thought her public sector experience, and understanding of collaboration would be an asset on the Council. She stated her goal for the city was to ensure it was fiscally sound, and responsive to citizens. Noted that she liked the new budget format.

**Recess** 9:25 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

**Adele Della Santina,** former Councilmember and Planning Commissioner currently belongs to the Belmont Chamber of Commerce, Samceda, Neighborhood Association. Ms. Della Santina noted she keeps in touch with elected officials such as Joe Simitian, Jackie Speier and Mike Nevin. She thought the top issues in Belmont were traffic, finances and roads. She thought her experience and lack of an agenda was an asset. She requested the Council to encourage the Planning Commission to approve projects quickly. Ms. Della Santina stated that if appointed, she would not serve on as many committees as she did when elected .

**Kenn Parsons,** current Planning Commissioner, served on various City Task Forces, Volunteer for the Police Department, Chamber of Commerce, Homeowners Association member. Thought the top priorities were the City Finances, Police Station/City Hall, Infrastructure Problems and the need to market Belmont for business opportunities. Mr. Parsons stated that he worked as a planner for 30 years with Federal, State and local governments and oversaw the conversion of Treasure Island. He noted that the city

needed a stronger tax base and suggested hiring an Economic Development Director.

**ADJOURNMENT 9:55 P.M.**

George Metropulos  
City Clerk Pro Tem

Meeting tape recorded.  
Tape No. 542